POLITICS WITHOUT POLITICAL IDEOLOGIES: A THREAT TO PEACE AND NATIONAL SECURITY IN NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

Political party as an institution of the state performs very critical functions in any democratic setting and beyond. Democracy flourishes where there are issue-based political parties. Democracy will be meaningless without political parties and political parties can be defined based on their ideologies. It is because of these important roles of political parties in modern electoral democratic states that made many political researchers and analysts contend that it is a fact that "political parties create democracy; modern democracy is unthinkable save in terms of parties". There is no other thing that determines the people's view and role of political parties in any constituted state except their "political ideologies." Using the historical method of data analysis, this study found out that Nigeria's political parties in Pre-Independence, First Republic, Second Republic, Third Republic, and Fourth Republic lacked political ideologies. The study attributed some of the systemic ills, especially, the porous nature of national security in Nigeria, to the lack of issue-based political parties.

Keywords: Political parties, political ideologies, national security, democracy.

INTRODUCTION

It has been theorized that political ideology, or the idea that political beliefs and attitudes are connected in a cohesive system, is especially crucial for a functioning democracy. The advantages of having a group of people with the same political ideologies are numerous. In contrast, it may be challenging for representatives to understand voters'

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expectations and aspirations when they have inconsistent, ever-changing opinions that lack any kind of broad framework.

One of the most complex and critical institutions of democracy is the political party" (Omotola, 2009). Political parties have been idealized to the point where academics believe that without them, neither democracy nor democratic society is imaginable. Simon (1962) opined that political parties are "playing an intermediary and mediatory role between the government and the electorate.

It is important to understand the role and magnitude of power that political parties possess. "The relationship between political parties and the state is a complex one. This is because it is the party that forms the government, the latter being the institution of the state" (Omotola, 2009). As a result, the ideologies of the victorious party most times are subtly adapted to become ideologies of the state, at least for the period of a particular administration.

On the flip side, it can be dangerous, and even pose a threat to the national security of a nation when politics is run without certain political ideologies in place. This will be the case for a state that doesn't adopt a democracy of bodies such as political parties. While this may be so, there may also be states with functioning political parties, whose aims aren't focused on their belief system. As Olaniyi (2022) succinctly noted, "parties need to be ideologically driven instead of merely being aspirational driven." The power embodied in such ideologies is enormous and, if not accurately deployed, could cause a gap in the state's security system. "The political party in power has a critical segment of both the state and society" (Tripp, 2001:105).

The state of the Nigerian security system would be vulnerable without the political ideologies in place. However, even though these ideologies are present and actively being deployed, some of them are recommended on pure sentiment. Omotola (2009) argued that "due to the shallowness of democratic roots especially in the developing countries, other forces of identity particularly ethnicity and religion would appear to have taken the place of ideology." The danger in Omotola's argument is huge. When religion and ethnicity take the place

of the ideology that is supposed to cover the entire state, conflict is inevitable, which will inadvertently interrupt the prevalence of peace.

METHODOLOGY

Due to the issue under study which is more of a theoretical exposition, the study adopted a qualitative method of data collection and analysis which is based on a historical approach. In other words, the qualitative method mainly depends on secondary sources of information like historical documents, books, magazines, journal articles, internet sources, etc. Data for this work was accessed through a secondary method and analyzed historically.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

There are many theories in the field of social sciences, but this paper adopted System Theory as the most contextually suitable and analytical theory with respect to the issue under investigation. Hence, Easton (1965) was the first to think of an analysis of politics from a systems analysis perspective. System theorists assume that "political phenomena can best be analysed by viewing them as parts of a systemic whole" (Isaak, 1985: 273). Easton (1953: 78) defined the political system as "that system of interactions in any society through which binding or authoritative allocations are made and implemented".

Thus, the ability to make "authority or binding allocations" distinguishes the political system from other systems. Easton (1965) contends that the political system exists in an environment of other systems - physical, biological, social, and psychological - which influence it and are in turn, influenced by it. Easton's emphasis was on the intra-system behaviour of the various systems as principal areas of research. The political system, according to him, is both open and adaptive and can respond to disturbances emanating from the environment under which it has to function (Varma, 1999: 195).

The political system according to Easton (1953a. 1965a and 1965b), functions by receiving input in the form of demands and supports from its environment. This shows that the nature and character of political parties in Nigeria are defined by the system they

operate in. The system they operate in has no well-defined roadmaps. This is the main reason political parties in Nigeria have no roadmaps or policy contents. That is why Easton (1965) opined that the political system does not depend only on its regulatory mechanisms for persistence and survival. It also relies on support which are expression of the citizens or societal approval of the system and/or its leaders as legitimate. Supports may be overt in the form of actions that are clearly and manifestly supportive, or covert which entails supportive attitudes and sentiments. The inputs (both in the form of demands and supports) that the political system receives usually go through a conversion process within the system, and then take the form of outputs.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The word "ideology" made its first appearance in France in the eighteenth century as an "ide'ologie" (literally idea-ology) in French word. It emerged during the French revolution. It was coined by a French philosopher "Antoine Louis Claude Destutt, Comte de Tracy" in 1796 as a name for what he called his "science of ideas". Destutt de Tracy claimed to have adopted it from the epistemological philosophy of John Locke and Etienne Bonnot de Condillac in his first draft work on ideology entitled *Elements d' Ide'ologie* (*Element of Ideology*). He defined ideology as the "science of ideas".

Nnoli (2003:178), views ideology as "a systematized and interconnected set of ideas about the socio-economic and political organization of society as a whole." He further contends that "it contains ideals, ends, and purposes that the society should pursue. Based on an interpretation of the past, it explains the present and offers a vision of the future. It suggests the aims and limits of political power." Furthermore, Hamilton as cited in John Gerring (1997:959) views ideology as "a system of collectively held attitudes advocating a particular pattern of social relationships and arrangements, and/or aimed at justifying a particular pattern of conduct, which its proponents seek to promote, realize, pursue or maintain."

Hence, in this paper, we shall define political ideology as a systematic, coherent, and action-oriented set of political ideas and

beliefs that have an explanatory, evaluative, and pragmatic power that guides the political behaviour of society or a group of people that share/held the view. Political ideology determines the actions or inactions of political actors in the realm of political affairs. It also seeks to organize, preserve, modify, or change the existing political system either through evolutionary or revolutionary means.

Political ideology is systematic because it combines theory and practice (actions). According to Mcillins as cited in Livessey (2006:1), political ideology involves "a program of collective action for the maintenance, alteration or transformation of society." Some the examples of political ideologies which are also economical because one cannot separate economic questions from political questions are Socialism, Capitalism, Liberalism, Conservatism, Globalism, Fascism, Populism, Libertarianism, Communism, Nazism, etc. These definitions hold two things in common: that ideology is a "set of ideas and also a system of beliefs."

Political ideology has some basic features which distinguish it from other related concepts like political philosophy, political theory, public policy, etc. According to Hayes (2003: 233), political ideology must have the following attributes:

i. It must be held by a group
ii. It must concern matters important to the group
iii. It must be functional
iv. It must justify actions and attitudes characteristic of the group.
v. It must be reasonable, consistent and coherent
vi. Its claims must be true
vii. It must be applicable in some political context
viii. It must appeal to political values shared by those who do not subscribe to it.

Over the years, political scientists, philosophers, sociologists, and psychologists have expounded and enunciated different varieties of political ideologies in which governments across the globe are or can be organized. There are more than one hundred varieties of political

ideologies which are based on utopianism whereas some are practicable. Despite these variations and the proliferation of types of political ideologies, the majority of political scientists are of the agreement that there are two main types of political ideologies.
These are:

i. Socialism or Ideology of the Left
ii. Capitalism or Ideology of the Right

These show that a state can either be a leftist or rightist state (i.e. socialism/leftism or capitalism/rightism). These two basic types of political ideology which are also economical have shaped the nature and character of the world as a whole and individuals in particular. The type of political ideology a state practices affects the ways the citizens of that state reason, view the world, and commune with others.

Capitalism as an Ideology Generally Advocates for:

i. **Freedom/Liberalism**: According to Heywood the Latin "*liber*" referred to a class of free men, in other words, men who were neither serfs nor slaves. Hayes (2003), believes that "liberalism is best defined etymologically since "freedom" or "liberty" are the key words especially free thought, free speech, freedom of religion, free trade and free association." Capitalism is freedom and freedom is capitalism. In other words, they are inseparable. The liberals or capitalists believe that individuals have the right to choose as it pleases them without any obstruction neither from their fellow citizens or governments as far as they did not violate the rights of others.
ii. **Individualism**: Capitalism argues for the supremacy of individuals. They place primary priority on the individual more than any other thing. Capitalism as an ideology contends that individuals are rational and in a position to determine their fate without government unnecessary interference.
iii. **Evolutionary Change**: Capitalists contend that change is necessary for society to grow but it must be via an evolutionary process. Liberalism preaches against revolutionary change in society; that change should be through incrementalism.

iv. **The Free Market**: A market that is devoid of government forces between the supply and demand for the classical capitalists is the best for the state economy to grow and be sustainable. Accordingly, an ideal market has neither external nor internal forces that regulate it. But one that is regulated by the interaction of the forces of demand and supply or what Adam Smith called the "invisible hand" of the force of demand and supply.

v. **Rationalism**: According to the adherents of capitalist ideology man is a rational being who is capable of logical reasoning which will help him solve his problem without government interference.

Socialism in General Advocates for:

i. **Collectivism**: Human beings are social and political animals by nature that live in society and therefore have to commune with one another as social beings and work collectively. That man is naturally a social and gregarious animal that needs to be protected is a factual statement.

ii. **Public Ownership**: The government, not individuals should own and manage the major means of production in the state. According to socialists, this will ensure equitable participation and fairness in the distribution of national resources.

iii. **Central Planned Economy**: This is one of the major tenets of socialism. This means that government should play a maximum role in the planning, executing, and management of the state economy. The political economy of the state should neither be regulated by private individuals nor by an invisible hand as capitalists or classical liberals advocate but by a government with visible hands.

iv. **Economic Equality:** Economic equality is the basis for other equalities. If one achieves economic rights or power first other rights like civil, social, legal, and political rights will follow or be added to it. Liberals place more emphasis on the civil and political rights of individuals with little or no regard for

economic rights which are the father of all rights according to socialists.

v. **Egalitarianism or Welfarism**: Government should ensure the social security of all citizens without class segregation. They advocate that any government that failed to provide for the needs of its citizens is a failed one and need not exist.
vi. **Revolutionary Change**: Change is necessary and since it is necessary it has to occur through revolutionary means. The vanguards of socialist ideology believe that change is necessary and constant which is generally agreed and therefore what is necessary is necessary and need not be evolutionary or incremental as capitalists preach but should be via a revolutionary or spontaneous means.
vii. **Social Security**: This is similar to number five which advocates the need for the provision and protection of the citizens' social needs. The socialists believe in the supremacy of the social well-being of the people.

POLITICAL PARTIES AND POLITICAL IDEOLOGIES IN NIGERIA: HISTORICAL ANALYSES

Nnoli (2003:177) believes that "there can be no politics without ideology, and no ideology without politics." He vividly enunciates the importance of ideology in politics as thus:

> Ideology is a very crucial aspect of politics. Arising from the people's understanding and evaluation of, as well as an emotional identification with, the reality it acts as a kind of map for the practice and interpretation of politics. It guides, supports, restrains, and rationalizes political action. At the same time, it can as a great mobilizing and energy to galvanize mass political action. Ideology is a very pervasive aspect of politics: it antedates it, is enmeshed in it, envelops it, and conditions it. There can be no politics without ideology, and no ideology without politics (Nnoli, 2003:177).

PRE-INDEPENDENCE AND POST-INDEPENDENCE POLITICAL PARTIES AND POLITICAL IDEOLOGIES IN NIGERIA (1923-1966)

The genesis of the first indigenous political party in Nigeria can be attributed to the formation and adoption of the Clifford Constitution of 1922 which introduced the Elective Principle. The Elective Principle was introduced following incessant agitations by the African nationalists for inclusive administration. The introduction led to the formation of the Nigerian National Democratic Party (NNDP) by Herbert Macaulay in 1923 as the first political party in Nigeria. The primary aim of the party was to have representatives in the British Legislative Council in Lagos. The party won all three seats allocated to Lagos legislative council in 1923, 1928, and 1933 respectively. According to Anyaele (2003: 175), "the party was exclusively based in Lagos and had no national colouration as its name claimed". This shows that the first Nigerian political party was more regional than the national party. The party lacked a core national ideology which made it be a first ideologically barren political party in Nigeria. The Party had an immediate aim which was to have representatives in Lagos legislative council.

`The second political party in Nigeria was the Lagos Youth Movement formed in 1934 which was later renamed the Nigerian Youth Movement (NYM) in 1936. The sole aim of the party was to challenge the hegemonic power or domination of the Nigerian National Democratic Party in Lagos. Any other aims like achieving political independence for Nigeria, promotion of national unity, etc, were subsidiaries. The primary aim of the party was to wrest power from NNDP not to challenge the policies and programmes of the party then. However, the party had more national outlook than NNDP but it lacked ideology like its predecessor.

The National Council of Nigeria and Cameron (NCNC) was the third pre-independence political party in Nigeria. The party was formed in 1944 by Nnamdi Azikwe, Herbert Macaulay, and other nationalists. Omotola, J.S. (2006: 622) thinks that the party was relatively ideologically positioned left. According to him "NCNC appeared to be progressive and welfarist, predicated upon socialist ideology". This can be attributed to the nature of its formation and structural compositions

because it was formed by amalgamated trade unions, pressure groups, tribal unions, etc. But all the efforts of NCNC, to become the first ideological political party in Nigeria withered due to ethnicism and other primordial sentimental issues.

The fourth pre-independence political party in Nigeria was the Action Group (AG) which was formed out of the Yoruba socio-cultural organization known as the Egbe Omo Oduduwa in 1950 under the amiable leadership of Chief Obafemi Awolowo (Omotala, J.S. 2006:620). The primary aim of the party was to achieve ethnic hegemony in Yoruba land. The party was also believed to be ideologically positioned left. Omotola (2006: 622) also contends that the party "appeared to be progressive and welfarist, predicated upon socialist ideology." The socialist nature of AG was rightly and empirically demonstrated following the introduction of some socialist programmes in the region especially the policy of free education.

Unfortunately, the AG lost its position in the political history of Nigeria like NCNC for becoming the first ideological political party in Nigeria due to ethnic, hegemonic, and primordial sentiments that altered its national outlook. Throughout the formation and existence of AG, it was a regionally based political party. Although one need not be surprised because of this, the party was a Yoruba socio-cultural organization not minding that it changed its name and registered as a political party. The content was the same. The party retained all ethnic attributes it inherited from a cultural group.

The Northern people's Congress (NPC) was the fifth pre-independence political party in Nigeria formed in 1951. Similar to AG and NPC, it metamorphosed from the Northerner's cultural organization known as Jam' iyyar mutanen Arewa founded in December 1949 (Anyaele, 2003: 177). Anyaele further contends that the party "was dominated by the Hausa-Fulanis and had its roots in the Muslims religion of Islam". Like NCNC and AG, the party was an ethnic hegemonic party with the primary aim to maintain total control of the northern region. Other aims were subsidiaries. One thing about the party was that it was more of a religious than a secular organisation.

The party was relatively positioned right. The party advocated for status quo or orderliness which made its unconscious ideology to be conservatism. It was unconscious because the party members did not know that it was an ideology due to ethnic contention, which if they had known and used it as it should be, would have been better. Omotola (2006:622) aptly stated that NPC "was an essentially conservative and elitist party."

Nigeria as a sovereign state achieved her status of republicanism on October 1, 1963. This led to structural changes in Nigerian political systems except for her political parties. The political parties in the first republic were not different from that of pre-independence parties in terms of their ideologies and structural incompatibility.

The three major political parties in the pre-independence era namely: NCNC, NPC, and AG also dominated the political horizons of the Nigerian first republic. The only structural difference between the pre-independence and first republican political parties was that the latter was based mostly on alliance more than the former. In the first republic, all political parties formed into two major alliances in build-up for the 1964 Federal elections. The two alliances were: the Nigeria National Alliance, (NNA) and the United Progressive Grand Alliance (UPGA). The NNA consisted of the NPC and the NNDP while the UPGA consisted of the NCNC, AG, and NEPU. The alliances had neither blueprints nor a road maps (ideologies). This made them to be a marriage of incompatibility with no national agenda. The election was greeted by all manner of electoral frauds which contributed greatly to the demise of the first republic in 1966.

SECOND REPUBLICAN POLITICAL PARTIES AND POLITICAL IDEOLOGIES IN NIGERIA (1979-1983)

Following the 1966 military coup d'état in Nigeria, political activities were brought to stand still. It was in September 1978, when the ban placed on party politics was lifted that political activities in Nigeria started again. According to Anyaele (2003: 178), "when the ban placed on party politics was lifted…there was a rat race for the formation of political associations. The propensity to form and own political party in

line with the nature of multiparty system led to the formation as many as 52 political associations…"

Despite these huge numbers of issueless parties that were gallivanting and jostling for registration, only five of them were later registered by the Federal Electoral Commission for the election. The five registered parties were: the National Party of Nigeria (NPN), the Unity Party of Nigeria (NPP), the Great Nigeria peoples Party (GNPP), and the Peoples Redemption Party (PRP). The Nigeria Advance Party (NAP) was registered in 1982 thereby making the second republican Nigerian registered ideology based political party to six.

The differences between the first and second republican parties were their names. According to Osaghae as cited in Omotola, (2006), the second republic witnessed the emergence of more political parties; there was not much difference from what was obtained under the first Republic. According to them each political party still represented the interests of ethnic Lords and dominant ethnic groups despite their seemingly federal character. What happened was that they reincarnated under different nomenclatures with some two additional parties. Green and Rimmer (2007) contend that the National Party of Nigeria (NPN), the Nigerian People's Party (NPP), the Unity Party of Nigeria (UPN), and the Peoples Redemption Party (PRP), were all resurgences of the old ethnic parties of the 60s. They further argued that NPN was a reincarnation of the defunct NPC, NPP for NCNC, UPN for AG, PRP for NEPU, and the Great Nigerian Peoples' Party (GNPP) was also not neutral as it represented the interests of the ethnic lords of Borno and Gongola.

THIRD REPUBLICAN POLITICAL PARTIES AND POLITICAL IDEOLOGIES IN NIGERIA (1989-1993)

In the third republic, there was a change in the structural formation and composition of political parties in Nigeria. In line with his Transition to Civil Rule Decree, Ibrahim Babangida who was the military head of state in Nigeria then promised to return power to civilian rule. Two political parties were registered and recognized to operate. According to Anyaele (2003: 180), it was "for the first time, Nigeria had a

constitutional two-party system" The two registered parties were: the National Republican Convention (NRC) and, the Social Democratic Party (SDP). According to Ofoegbu (2008: 266), "Nigerian politicians, were made to identify with either of the two political parties". This showed sign of political maturity and improvement. Unlike before, the arrangement reduced the rate of issueless party politics and political tensions in Nigeria to the barest minimum.

The Social Democratic Party (SDP) was a little to the left while the National Republic Convention (NRC) was a little to the right (Omotola, 2006:621). Unlike political parties in pre-independence, first and second republics, the third republican political parties can empirically and macroscopically distinguish their right from left. The SDP believed in the ideology of leftism or socialism which espouses the primacy of the people's welfare and other social security programmes; while the NRC believed in the ideology of rightism or capitalism which advocated for political and socio-economic laissez-fairism. The defunct third republican political parties can be described as the first attempt by Nigerian politicians to form and operate their parties via the ideological spectrum. However, the ideologies of the two parties were in the incubation stage which did not hatch because the republic was botched. And the parties were not fully-fledged ideological parties.

FOURTH REPUBLICAN POLITICAL PARTIES AND POLITICAL IDEOLOGIES IN NIGERIA IN NIGERIA (1999-DATE)

Nigeria achieved her fourth republican status on May 29, 1999, when the military handed over power to the civilian government. This republic has been the longest. In a bid the preparation for the republic (i.e. 1999 general election), party politics as they use to be were the issue of the day. Many political associations were formed to be registered as political parties but only three that fulfilled the electoral requirements were registered. The registered parties were: the Alliance for Democracy (AD), the All Peoples Party (APP), and the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP). The three registered parties had neither ideologies nor blueprints on how to emancipate or build a nation-state like Nigeria from an underdeveloped to a developing state.

IDEOLOGICAL POSITIONS

Like other past republics, the fourth republican political parties in Nigeria may be the worst in terms of their lack of ideologies and structures. Omotola (2006: 624) rightly states that "if parties of previous republics were found wanting in ideological stance and commitment, those of the fourth Republic is worse". One should not be told that fourth republican parties stand for nothing because the manners in which they were formed are unethical and non-ideological.

CONTEMPORARY POLITICAL PARTIES AND POLITICAL IDEOLOGIES IN NIGERIA

In the developed world, parties are differentiated based on what they stand for in economic policies, socio-cultural issues, welfare issues, foreign policy issues, national security, etc, but in Nigeria parties are defined based on ethnic lines, religious belief, and personalities in the party; not on any defined ideology (Abiola, 2013).

Currently, there are 18 registered political parties while more than 60 others were deregistered according to the Independent National Electoral Commission's official website: www.inecnigeria.org. The parties and their acronyms are:

1. Accord (A)
2. Action Alliance (AA)
3. Action Democratic Party (ADP)
4. Action Peoples Party (APP)
5. African Action Congress (AAC)
6. African Democratic Congress (ADC)
7. All Progressives Congress (APC)
8. All progressives Grand Alliance (APGA)
9. Allied Peoples Movement (APM)
10. Boot Party (BP)
11. Labour Party (LP)
12. National Rescue Movement (NRM)
13. New Nigeria Peoples Party (NNPP)
14. Peoples Democratic Party (PDP)
15. Peoples Redemption Party (PRP)

16. Social Democratic Party (SDP)
17. Young Progressive Party
18. Zenith Labour Party (ZLP).

(Source: http://www.inecnigeria.org/?page-id=18).

Out of these registered political parties in Nigeria, only three control 36 states of the federation when this research was conducted. The three parties are:

1. The Peoples Democratic Party (PDP)
2. The All Progressives Change (APC)
3. The All Progressives Grand Alliance (APGA)

THE PEOPLES DEMOCRATIC PARTY AND POLITICAL IDEOLOGY

The Peoples Democratic Party can be best described as a big umbrella political party in Nigeria that genuinely houses few privileged classes and no iota of political ideology. As we have rightly stated early that the party was formed in 1998 in preparation for the 1999 general election. Although, the party was not formed based on any ideological issues but to take power from the military regime of Abudusalam Abubakar when he wanted to hand it over to civilian rule. The first-generation party members some of them are still active in politics are the reincarnation of the second republican politicians who had been economically and politically disenfranchised due to protracted military rule.

The party achieved its immediate aim when it emerged as a ruling party in Nigeria from 1999-2015. The Peoples Democratic Party lacks political ideology. The party fit nowhere in the global spectrum of political ideologies. It cannot be located or positioned either left or right not even at the centre. The ideological nil of PDP can be attributed to its nature of formation and the system it finds itself.

THE ALL PROGRESSIVES CONGRESS (APC)

APC is one of the ideologically barren political parties in Nigeria. The party was formed out of frustration and protracted thirst for power by

some former opposition parties in Nigeria when it became clear to them that the Peoples Democratic Party which was a ruling party then in Nigeria had developed a taproot in Nigeria's political system which needs joint actions and strong alliance to uproot. The opposition parties realized that victory or needed success can never be achieved alone, and that the need for alliance to overcome superior forces is paramount.

APC is a new political name but not a new political party in Nigeria. The party was formed by a merger of three main opposition political parties in Nigeria. The parties were: the Action Congress of Nigeria (ACN), the All Nigeria Peoples Party (ANPP), and the Congress for Progressive Change (CPC). In addition, a faction of the All Progressive Grand Alliance (APGA) joined the Merger.

It was not formed to fill the wide ideological gaps created by the ruling Peoples Democratic Party then to right the existing political and socio-economic wrongs in Nigeria. Like other Nigerian political parties, APC has an immediate aim when it was formed which was to wrest power from PDP which it has successfully achieved. The aim of the party was made known to Nigerians during the merger process and after.

Following the endorsement of the merger by ten opposition merging governors, the parties finally merged on 7, February 2013. The chairman of the merger committee in the person of Tom lkimi who has now defected to PDP said that the need for the formidable party to wrest power from the PDP is more urgent than ever. Some parts of the communiqué issued by the Chairman of the merger committee read thus:

> At no time in our national life has radical change become more urgent. And to meet the challenge, we the following political parties namely ACN, ANPP, APGA, and CPC have resolved to merge forthwith and become All Progressives Congress and offer to our beleaguered people a recipe for peace and prosperity…(Premium Times, 2022).

THE ALL PROGRESSIVE GRAND ALLIANCE (APGA)

APGA is another party in Nigeria that has no position in the spectrum of world political ideologies like other Nigerian parties. The party is not big in terms of the number of members, states it controls, and national colouration when it is compared to PDP and APC. A party like APGA which is very small is easy to coordinate suppose it has political beliefs or a national blueprint (ideology).

The party was registered by the INEC in 2003. One of the founders of the party was former Biafra warlord Chief Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu. The party has an ethnic identity that has shattered its national outlook. Furthermore, due to the party being ideologically nil, it has been adopting another political party's presidential candidate as its candidate too. In the 2011 general election, the party consensually endorsed the candidate of PDP in the person Dr. Goodluck Jonathan who won the election. The party also endorsed him again for the 2015 presidential election even before his party (PDP) endorsed him. According to the national chairman of APGA then Chief Victor Umeh, the party endorsed the president based on national unity and performance. APGA as a political party has continued to renounce some of its primary responsibilities or the reasons it exists as a political party which are to contest elections, wines, and form government for the service of humanity. APGA has no political direction (ideology); it cannot be positioned left or right.

ETHNICITY, PEACE, NATIONAL SECURITY, AND POLITICAL IDEOLOGIES IN NIGERIA

Nnoli, (2003:182) enunciates the role of ideology in politics thus:

> Ideology enhances the political appeal of a political party. A coherently articulated ideology is an important attribute of a political party; it differentiates one party from another. Otherwise, all parties would look alike with no proof of superiority, only personalities, and ethnicity. Ideology constitutes the big and long-term program of the party; it needs to be stepped down to a manifesto during elections

Ethnic politics only flourishes in the absence of political ideology. Ideology does not know ethnic or religious boundaries insofar as one held the same belief as others, whether he/she is from North, South, East, or West, does not matter. The unity of many African countries is still under question due to the lack of political ideology among many countries which would have a positive unit or divide them based on important national issues. This absence of political ideology paves the way for different ethnic hegemonic groups or blocs to emerge with the intent to devour the collective happiness of the people.

In Nigeria, if political parties are formed based on ideology, it can eradicate ethnicism and improve national security. The unity of Nigeria is still questionable unless she finds another thing that will divide Nigerians apart from ethnicity and religious belief. This is because human beings by nature ought to be divided to unite and sometimes to make life interesting. It is only an ideology that can positively divide people based on national issues or national interests for the betterment of the entire citizenry, and the service of humanity.

To date, despite the prevalence of political parties in the Nigerian electoral system, political ideologies are lacking, thereby opening the floodgates of insecurity. The majority of voters often prefer a particular candidate because of their ethnic or religious affiliations. In the same vein, while candidates, parties often present criteria that mostly favour a particular candidate. This, in essence, explains why some political parties often have internal conflicts. When the party's ideology is relegated to showing favouritism to a particular candidate, then conflict is imminent.

If conflicts can arise as a result of the relegation of ideologies, then national security would be in turmoil if those ideologies aren't in place at all. To a large extent, Nigeria's security system is undergoing threat, as the ideologies of the available political party are only but an illusion. While the prevalence of peace is the desire of every nation, attaining it would mean adequately establishing and implementing holistic ideologies around the political system. For Nigeria, to strengthen the security system and promote peace, then the dominant

political system must re-establish its political ideologies, exulting over ethnic and religious sentiment.

That is when you can see true national unity and enhanced national security. Again, political ideology promotes national integration. According to Omotola (2009:615) in absence of ideologies "other forces of identity particularly ethnicity and religion would appear to have taken the place of ideology."

CONCLUSION

The high rate of carpet-crossing and defections in the Nigerian political system from one political party to another without any reasonable cause which is a threat to national security is an empirical indicator of a lack of political ideologies among political parties in Nigeria. Forming or joining a political party should never be based on immediate egocentric material gains but on how people view the state and on how best it should be governed for the benefit of all. That is why Olaitan (2014:22) says that "Nigeria's political parties have similarities than differences; the only visible difference being their names. He further argues that "it is sad we lack the opportunity to vote in terms of party ideology rather; we vote for personalities. This is because the best they do in the absence of party ideology is to look for the candidate of their choice." The absence of ideology in Nigeria's political parties is of great concern. Parties are no longer after the doctrines, myths or beliefs; they do not offer anything special to differentiate them from other parties." Ajia (2009:9), aptly argues that "as of now, there is no clearly defined political ideology for the most populous black nation on earth." He further opined that "any reorientation or rebranding of Nigeria has to start with defining what Nigeria stands for."

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